

REMARKS**Summary of the Final Office Action**

Claims 1-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haendle (U.S. Patent No. 4,722,097) (hereinafter "Haendle") in view of Aufrichtig et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,359,961) (hereinafter "Aufrichtig").

Claims 8-10, 12-14, 16-18 and 20-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over a non-patent document to Rao et al. (hereinafter "Rao") in view of Gravelle et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,233,349) (hereinafter "Gravelle") and Aufrichtig.

Claims 6-7, 11, 15, 19 and 23 are allowed.

Summary of the Response to the Office Action

Applicants have canceled rejected claims 1-4, 8-10, 12-14, 16-18 and 20-22 without prejudice or disclaimer. The dependency of rejected claim 5 has been amended so that claim 5 is now dependent on allowed claim 6. Accordingly, claims 5-7, 11, 15, 19 and 23 are currently pending for consideration.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haendle in view of Aufrichtig. Claims 8-10, 12-14, 16-18 and 20-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rao in view of Gravelle and Aufrichtig. The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 6-7, 11, 15, 19 and 23 are allowed.

Applicants have canceled rejected claims 1-4, 8-10, 12-14, 16-18 and 20-22 without prejudice or disclaimer. The dependency of rejected claim 5 has been amended so that claim 5 is now dependent on allowed claim 6. Accordingly, claims 5-7, 11, 15, 19 and 23 remain currently pending for consideration and are now in prima-facie condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION


In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request the entry of the Amendment to place the application in clear condition for allowance or, in the alternative, in better form for appeal. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution. A favorable action is awaited.

EXCEPT for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0573. This paragraph is intended to be a **CONSTRUCTIVE PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

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